

Quarterly Newsletter

January, February, March 2011

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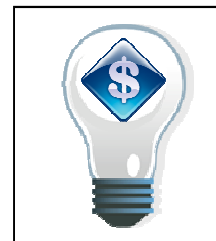
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*Preserving Soil & Water
through Conservation*

Conserve Energy and Save Money

Architectural Studies, University of Missouri Extension



Are your finances in a constant state of turmoil? Your energy bills can be a large monthly expense. Every little action you do to use less energy can make a difference in your pocket book. It may be as easy as turning off the lights. Read on for more low to no-cost solutions that will help you conserve energy and save money!

For your appliances and electronics: A plugged-in appliance is constantly pulling energy from the outlet. Plug your appliances into a power strip and turn it off when not in use • Turn off your monitor when away from your computer for 20 minutes or more • Turn off your computer when not in use for over 2 hours • Use the 'cool down' cycle on your dryer to allow clothes to finish drying with heat that is left in the dryer • Clean out the lint filter on your dryer after each load • Use a clothesline to dry your laundry.

For your kitchen: Avoid using pots and pans that do not fit the burner size of your stove top • Use a toaster oven when cooking small dishes instead of using a large oven • Avoid preheating your oven if the food requires an hour or more of cooking time • Do not use your oven to heat the kitchen • Avoid opening the door of your oven while you are baking • Run the exhaust fan while you are cooking • Make sure that your refrigerator door is closed tightly • Scrape dirty dishes before placing them in your dishwasher • Wash full loads of dishes in dishwasher • Air-dry your dishes instead of using your dishwasher's drying option.

For water: Tighten leaky faucets or collect dripping water and pour on plants • Lower thermostat on water heater • Use a cold or warm water setting instead of hot on your washing machine • Take showers instead of baths.

For your car: Avoid speeding and excessive acceleration • Keep tires properly inflated and rotated to maintain the car's proper gas mileage • Use grade of motor oil recommended by manufacturer • Remove unnecessary items from vehicle to avoid decrease in gas mileage • Avoid idling vehicle.

For lighting: Turn off any lights that are not in use • Use compact fluorescent bulbs instead of incandescent bulbs • Use natural light when available.

For the summer: Avoid placing lamps or TV sets near the air-conditioning thermostat • Set thermostat to 75° or above • Close blinds during the day • Close bathroom door after showering and run exhaust fan to prevent humidity from entering home.

For the winter: Open blinds and drapes during the day • Close blinds and drapes at night • Use a 'draft dodger' around your doors and windows • Set thermostat at a lower temperature when the home is empty or at night (65° recommended) • Leave your bathroom door open after showering to release humidity into your home.

To learn how to calculate your energy usage, view this entire document online at <http://missourifamilies.org/housing/energy/Energy.pdf>. For more information on this topic, visit our Energy index page.

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Iron County Soil & Water Conservation District

Available Loans to Farmers and Ranchers

Michael Hinkebein, FSA Farm Loan Manager

Farm Service Agency, along with its normal loans for purchasing of livestock, equipment or real estate, now has available a conservation loan program. Many farmers who want and need to implement conservation measures on their land but do not have the “up-front” funds available to implement these practices. The goal of FSA’s Conservation Loan is to provide farmers access to the credit to implement these practices. Unlike our traditional loans, a credit denial is not required. If you have an EQIP program, such as rotational grazing, water structures, any soil or water conservation practices that is shown in the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) plan or tool kit and approved is eligible. Loan limits are up to \$300,000 direct or \$1,119,000 from a commercial lender wanting a guarantee. Interest rates will vary from month to month, but for December it was 4.125%. A Deed of Trust will be taken on the land that is improved with these funds.

Farm Storage facility loans are also available for construction of new structures or improvements to existing facilities for grain and hay storage. These loans are handled out of your local FSA office and are funded by Commodity Credit Corporation. This is a 7 year loan for amounts under \$100,000. CCC will finance 85% of the total eligible cost to construct the facility. Applicant must provide financials to show they have the 15% cash down and repayment ability for the loan amount. Once the facility is finished, FSA will make a final inspection and the loan for 85% of the total cost will be set up. Interest rate for these facility loans for December is 2%. A Deed of Trust on the land that the barn is built will be required or a piece of ground of a value to secure the loan amount. Grain storage facilities may be secured with a financing statement through the Secretary of State’s office.

“Tis the season” for the young FFA and 4-H members to be thinking about your project for the fairs this coming year. FSA offers Youth Loans to those between the ages of 10-21 to purchase livestock or equipment in the amount of \$5000 or less for a term not to exceed 7 years. Loans for fair projects are set up for 1 year and payable when the fair is over and the livestock sold. Loans for breeding animals are normally set up on a 5 year term and payable when the offspring is projected to be sold. The application will be signed by the applicant, with the parents and group advisor signing as sponsors. The note, however, will be signed only by the applicant unless a feasible cash flow cannot be developed, then the parents may be asked to co-sign the note. Interest rate for these loans in December was 1.75%.

If you have any questions about any of these loan types, please contact your local Farm Service Agency office at 573-756-6488.

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service Announces...

The Conservation Stewardship Program CSP (Take a Look At This Program!)

The Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) is a voluntary program that encourages producers to address resource concerns in a comprehensive manner by: 1) Undertaking new conservation activities or enhancements, 2) while maintaining existing conservation practices. **What does this mean?**

Basically, you get “credit” for all the conservation work you’ve done in the past. This “credit” is in the form of a higher score on your CSP application. Why is this important? The score on your application directly relates to the amount of money that the program will offer you. So, if you’ve been practicing good conservation over the years, CSP could be a beneficial program for you to take a look at. If approved, you enroll your entire operation. You then receive an annual per acre payment each year for 5 years for ALL the acres in your operation.

Payments vary for each application depending on the level of conservation stewardship, but in general Pastureland payment rates have been between \$9 and \$19 per acre. Forest land applications have been between \$2 and \$10 per acre. Cropland applications have been between \$12 and \$26.

That, in a nutshell, is the “maintaining existing conservation practices” part of CSP. The other part of the application score is undertaking an additional conservation activity. There are many activities or enhancements to choose from. They range from relatively simple to relatively complicated to implement. The good thing is that it’s your choice! You choose the additional activity that you then agree to implement. Again, the additional activity that you choose directly influences the per acre payment rate that the program will offer you. So, additional activities that offer a higher level of resource conservation also offer a higher payment.

We are accepting applications for this program year round. However, if you want to be considered for CSP 2011, you’ll need to submit an application by January 21, 2011. Applications can be picked up at the USDA Service Center, 812 Progress Drive, Farmington, MO or online at www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/new_csp

Call Rob Morrow, NRCS District Conservationist, at (573) 756-6488 ext. 3 for more information.

No-till Drill
Available to Rent
\$8.00 per Acre

Call 573-546-6518
For more information



Soil test kits are available through the Extension office

Secrets For Making Resolutions Stick by Melinda Hemmelgarn, M.S., R.D., former Nutritional Sciences Specialist, College of Human Environmental Sciences, University of Missouri Extension

By the end of January, most people who have made unrealistic New Year's resolutions will have burned out. But if you know the following secrets, those good intentions can stick forever. Good luck!

Make lifestyle changes because YOU want to. Make changes for you, not your husband, wife, mother or sister.

Make small changes and chart your progress. The single biggest mistake people make is biting off more than they can chew - quitting smoking, losing 50 pounds in two weeks and exercising every day. It's just too much. According to the American Council on Science and Health, stopping smoking is the single most important change you can make. Don't worry about gaining a pound or two - it's nothing compared to the health benefits you'll gain by quitting smoking. If you want to lose weight, focus on losing 5 pounds at a time. Changing lifestyle habits will get you to where you want to be for the long term, and that's what counts. It's not about how much weight you lose in two weeks, but how much weight you can keep off for the rest of your life.

Keep a journal. It allows you to track your progress so you can give yourself credit for the smallest accomplishments you make - they all add up. Journaling can also be used to document your emotions and help you see if there are patterns to your eating habits. Do you eat when you're angry, bored, nervous? If so, then find alternative activities to get to the real problems.

Find a buddy. Exercisers are more likely to stick to their plans when they know someone is waiting for or depending on them. If you prefer to exercise by yourself but find boredom is a problem, get a headset and listen to enjoyable music. The key to sticking with exercise is looking at it as fun. Find activities you enjoy, vary them and schedule them into your calendar as you would any important appointment.

Practice positive self talk. So often, we don't even realize that we are giving ourselves negative messages. Catch yourself and turn those statements around. Tell yourself that you enjoy getting up a few minutes early to exercise and that you feel great and look better when you exercise. If you catch yourself saying that your legs are too fat, STOP right there and find something positive to say instead such as I have a beautiful smile, I have attractive eyes, I look good in a particular color, etc. Assume you'll be successful, and you will be. To view this article online, go to: <http://missourifamilies.org/features/nutritionarticles/nut11.htm>

Growing Citrus Fruit Indoors

According to Michele Warmund, State Fruit Extension Specialist, there are many different types of citrus trees that can be grown indoors. Sweet citrus trees tend to be difficult, however sour oranges and other acid citrus species are easy to grow in containers. Many will also bear several crops of fruit each year if given optimum growing conditions. These plants do well when moved outdoors for the summer—be sure the weather is reliably warm, and bring them in well before the first frost.

Citrus trees can be wonderful houseplants if properly cared for. They have flushes of creamy white flowers with a sweet fragrance in addition to the fruit and the glossy dark leaves! Look for dwarf varieties.

Citrus trees grown indoors require a container at least 14 inches in diameter and a soil that is loose and well drained with a pH of 5.5-6.5. They like temperatures around 55-65 degrees F with at least 8 hours of sunlight. For trees to perform their best, night temperatures should not reach below 50 degrees F. Southern light exposure is best. Citrus trees also benefit from humidity levels of 30 to 60 percent. Beware of overwatering. Let the soil dry to the touch before watering and do not let citrus plants stand in a saucer of water. Watch for sucking insects such as scale, mealy bugs, white flies and spider mites.

Here are some varieties you might try: **Calamondin sour orange** (*Citrus mitis*) is a compact tree that grows fruit about the size of quarters. They are not very sweet but do make a wonderful marmalade. Trees are said to grow anywhere between two to eight feet tall. **Meyer Lemon** (*Citrus limonia meyeri*) grows the fastest of all the citrus varieties. They produce thin-skinned fruit that are large and less acid than ordinary lemons. **Tahiti and Persian Limes** are quite thorny which may be a negative factor for some households. They are also very tender, hardy only to 32 degrees F. **Meiwa Kumquats** are great producers of small orange-like fruit that can be eaten peel and all! They are very ornamental and are very hardy down to 18 degrees F. Citrus plants are available from major plant suppliers, like Burpee, Gurney and Stark Brothers.

4-H Recruitment by Debra Henk, 4-H Youth Specialist

4-H is looking for kids who would like to join a 4-H Livestock Club, and for parents who would like to help.

Raising a steer or hog to show at a fair or an achievement day is a great way to teach responsibility, organizational skills, perseverance and patience—qualities that help a child become a success in school and in life. Volunteers are needed to help teach kids good husbandry practices and fair play. Low cost loans are also available to 4-H members for the purchase of livestock. If you would like to help develop good citizens using 4-H curriculum and research, or for more information on the low cost livestock loans, please call the Iron County Extension Office at 573-546-7515.

EXTENSION COUNCIL MEMBERS: KENNY WOOTEN, CHAIRMAN ♦ SHELBY CHAN, VICE CHAIRMAN ♦ RACHEL TYNDALL, TREASURER
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15th Annual Heartland Forage Day

Emphasis on Equestrian

Save the date! Friday, February 18th, from 3 to 8 pm at the Herbst Farm in St. Francois County. This year's event will focus on proper nutrition, proper saddle-fitting, cost share programs and sacrifice area installation. Featured guest speaker will be Jeff Woodbury, the 2010 Ultimate Equestrian Challenge Winner and owner of Southern Cross Saddle Shop in Eugene, MO. The cost for this event is \$10 per person and your meal is included. Please register by calling 573-883-3566 ext 3, or for more information. The Heartland Forage Day is sponsored by NRCS, University Extension and the Soil & Water Conservation Districts of Ste. Genevieve, St. Francois and Perry Counties.

UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI
Extension

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*FSA Loans
*4-H Recruitment
*Making Resolutions Stick
*Growing Citrus Fruit Indoors
*CSP

Ag Expo 2011 (Family Event)

January 21st, 1 pm - 8 pm & January 22nd, 9 am - 3 pm at Black River Coliseum, Poplar Bluff, MO. Admission is FREE! Scheduled events include: Over 118 Agriculture Exhibits, Private Applicator Training, Duck Calling Contest, Milking Contest, FFA Driving Contest, Kids Gardening Adventure, Old Time Auction, Turkey Calling Contest, Baking Contest, Ag Photography Contest, Door Prizes, Seminars, Entertainment, Petting Farm, Toy Tractor Pedal-Pull Contest and Ag Expo Beauty Pageant for ages birth to 20 years old. Registration fee applies for Beauty Pageant. For scheduling of events or pageant registration, call 573-686-8064. This event is sponsored by Butler County University of Missouri Extension Council & Three Rivers Community College Agriculture Club.

Cost-Share Funding for Iron County

Iron County Soil & Water Conservation District was allocated \$95,451.80 for Fiscal Year 2011. Through the different cost-share practices available, we have 62% of that money obligated to land owners. Practices include Grazing Management, Woodland Exclusion, Seeding, Ponds and Sensitive Areas. For more information on available funding, qualifications and programs available, stop by our office, located at 250 S Main Street in Ironton, 3rd Floor of the Iron County Court House or give us a call at 573-546-6518. Visit our web site at: www.swcd.mo.gov/iron for a complete list of cost-share practices, project photos, upcoming events and more.



Pond construction through the cost-share program, saving on soil erosion and providing water for livestock with a tank at the berm, southern Iron County.



Critical Area treatment through the cost-share program, filling in of a gully that washed through a hay field in Iron County. The filling in of soil was followed by seed and mulch.

Did You Know...?

That the average American eats 22 pounds of tomatoes each year, with most of the tomato consumption being in the form of ketchup • It takes 12 honeybees collecting the nectar from 2,000 flowers to produce a tablespoon of honey • Nearly one-third of our food comes from plants that are pollinated by honeybees • Alfalfa is one of the most nutritious crops to feed animals and records date back to as early as 1,000 BC of its use to feed livestock • The average cow can produce 2,100 pounds of milk in a month; that's 46,000 glasses of milk per year! • A hummingbird's heart beats at a rate of 1260 beats per minute • One silkworm cocoon contains 100 to 300 meters of silk and it takes 2000 to 3000 silkworm cocoons to make one pound of silk • If you are weighing your money, you'll need 454 dollar bills to make a pound • In the United States, we have 51 National Parks and 155 National Forests • The oldest living horse on record was "Old Billy" from England, who was 62 years old at the time of his passing in 1822.